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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/599,315

09/25/2006

Alfons Eblenkamp

20794/0205386-US0

6798

7278

7590

05/13/2009

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EXAMINER

GRAMLING, SEAN P

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2875

MAIL DATE

DELIVERY MODE

05/13/2009

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/599,315	Applicant(s) EBLENKAMP ET AL.	
	Examiner SEAN P. GRAMLING	Art Unit 2875	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 27 January 2009.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 5-10 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 5-10 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>1/27/09</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Amendment

1. Acknowledgment is made of Amendment filed January 27, 2009. Claim 10 is new. Claims 5-10 are pending.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. **Claims 5-10** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Christman et al* (US 2003/0205246) and further in view of *Ballen et al* (US 2003/0223250).
4. Regarding claims 5-7 and 9-10, Christman discloses an appliance comprising a housing 12 including a stamped section 37 recessed relative to a front 24 of the housing and circumferentially surrounding a loading opening 30 to rotatably mounted drum of the appliance; a door 32 disposed on the front of the housing for closing the loading opening, an edge of the door and a surrounding edge of the stamped section (the vertical edge surrounding door 32 when door 32 is closed) forming a gap area therebetween when the door is in a closed position (see Figure 3 and the gap formed between the surrounding vertical edge of stamped section 37 and the surrounding edge of the door 32, said gap

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necessarily existing so that door 32 can close); a illumination device 222 disposed in the stamped section 37 so as to be concealed behind the door when the door is in the closed position, wherein light of the illumination device 222 is reflected at an edge surface of the stamped section (light is reflected at the vertical edge of stamped section 37) (see Figures 1-4 and paragraphs [0032]-[0043][0075]). Christman teaches a light source (see paragraph [0075] disposed in an area of a hinge of the door, but does not specifically teach an optical waveguide having a light output surface at a periphery thereof disposed in the stamped section of the housing circumferentially about the loading opening, wherein the waveguide includes a light input surface configured to provide a light-conductive connection with the light source so as to provide an illuminating ring visible at the front of the housing in the gap area. However, optical waveguides positioned within stamped sections of housing for providing an illuminating ring around an object are well-known in the art and specifically taught in Ballen (see Ballen, Figures 6-10). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to include an optical waveguide within the gap between an edge of the stamped section 37 and the edge of door 32 in Christman as taught by Ballen in order to provide an efficient light system for illuminating the area around door 32 for viewing the door in darkened environments.

5. Regarding claim 8, the illumination device 222 in Christman includes a plurality of LED's (see paragraph [0075]) circumferentially spaced at an edge area of the opening 30, but Christman does not teach a diffuser. However,

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diffusers for LED's are well-known in the art and specifically taught in Ballen (see Ballen, Figures 6-10). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to include a diffuser within the gap between an edge of the stamped section 37 and the edge of door 32 in Christman as taught by Ballen in order to provide an efficient light system for illuminating the area around door 32 for viewing the door in darkened environments.

Response to Arguments

6. Applicant's arguments filed January 27, 2009 with respect to the rejection of the claims in the previous Office Action have been fully considered and are persuasive. Therefore, the rejection has been withdrawn. However, upon further consideration, a new ground of rejection is made in view of Christman and Ballen as set forth above.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to SEAN P. GRAMLING whose telephone number is (571)272-9082. The examiner can normally be reached on MONDAY-FRIDAY 7:30 AM-5:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Sandra O'Shea can be reached on (571) 272-2378. The

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fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Sean P Gramling
Examiner
Art Unit 2875

/SPG/
/Sharon E. Payne/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 2875